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THE LATIN COLUMN

LATIN TEACHERS' NOTICE

YOU ARE INVITED to send in ideas on the teaching of Latin which you may like to pass on to others, or to ask questions about your work which you may think possible of answer. Good suggestions will be printed in the Latin Column as space permits. Questions will be handled confidentially and answered promptly. Address G. A. Harrer, Chapel Hill, N. C.

LATIN USED TODAY

A PERSON who has a reasonably good command of Latin is often at an advantage over his non-Latin brother in reading some of the better magazines and periodicals of today. In articles, book-reviews, pages of literary gossip, and even in stories, Latin phrases and quotations quite frequently appear. To understand completely the meaning of a whole sentence or of a paragraph, not to say the meaning of the bit of Latin used, is oftentimes possible only for the reader who has studied his Latin. The point is illustrated by the following expression noticed in issues of *The Literary Review* during the first part of 1921: *vitis adhaerens; apologia pro vita sua; non sequitur; sui generis; qualitas occulta; quorum magna pars fui; homo sapiens; ars longa; ego; et al.; bona fide; et cetera; timor Domini; sine qua non; dramatis personae; varium et mutabile semper; obiter dicta; curriculum vitae; Vanitas vanitatum, et omnia vanitas; alia; me iudice; summum et ultimum opus; infra dig.* Where is the man who knows no Latin and yet can get the full meaning of the paragraphs in which these phrases appeared? High school teachers try them in your classes.—G. A. H.

THE FIFTH BOOK OF HORACE'S ODES

IT HAS BEEN SUPPOSED ever since the first century that Horace published only four books of Odes; but last year unexpectedly a fifth book was found (?) in an old manuscript and published in England by A. D. Godley with translations in verse by Rudyard Kipling and C. L. Graves. The preface sets forth some of the difficulties met by scholars in interpreting the new work. Even the venerable *Tomiotius* on one point admitted that he could "*neque caput rei neque caudam facere.*" The whole thing is of course a *tour de force*, illustrating the interest of cultured Englishmen in their Latin, and the fun even they get out of it.—G. A. H.

ENGLISH TEACHERS' COLUMN

STATE COUNCIL OF ENGLISH TEACHERS

THE MEETING of the North Carolina State Council of English Teachers at the North Carolina College for Women, Greensboro, last March, served to bring together from various sections of the state over seventy-five teachers of English in the high schools and colleges and provided a clearing house for the discussion of many of the problems now perplexing the teachers of English in both secondary and higher schools. One of the obligations assumed by the council was the preparation of a bulletin within the coming year which shall deal adequately with the problem of minimum requirements in English for graduation from the high school, and the future distribution of this bulletin to all the schools of the state. It was felt by all those present that this was the most urgent need of state teachers at the present time. A special committee of seven will prepare this report.

The following are the officers of the council for the current year: Miss Rennie Peele, Goldsboro High School, president; Prof. C. A. Hibbard, University of North Carolina, vice-president; Miss Annie Beam, Greensboro High School, secretary and treasurer; Prof. R. H. Thornton, North Carolina College for Women, reportorial secretary. The members of the executive committee are Prof. A. C. Hall, Prof. E. F. Shewmake, and Miss Laura Tillett. It was decided by the council to affiliate with the National Council of English Teachers, and Miss Eleanor Watson, of the Salisbury High School, was chosen as delegate to the Thanksgiving meeting in Chicago, with Prof. A. C. Hall, of N. C. College for Women as alternate.—R. H. T.

COMMITTEE ON MINIMUM ESSENTIALS
IN ENGLISH

AS A RESULT of the meeting of the Council of English Teachers at Greensboro, last March Miss Rennie Peele, the new president, has appointed a committee composed of representatives of the high schools and the colleges of the state to draw up minimum essentials for the high schools and grade schools.

Miss Peele announces that the following teachers have signified their willingness to serve as members of this committee: Professor Leonard Hurley, G. C. for Women; Miss Frances Womble, N. C. College for Women; Fred Morrison, principal Chapel Hill High School; Miss Mary C. Wiley, Winston-Salem High School; Miss Mary Loomis Smith, Durham High

School, and C. A. Hibbard (chairman) of the University of North Carolina.

This committee is now at work on their report which they are to present at the next annual meeting of the council. It seems likely that the report will be simplified as much as possible under such general topics as: spelling, capitalization, punctuation, sentence structure, diction, grammar, and manuscript preparation.

In order that this report may be as representative as possible the committee is anxious to hear from all of the teachers in the state in grade or high school or college. It is their desire to hear from every one interested in this problem. Once the report is accepted by the council it is hoped that it will be published and placed in the hands of every teacher of English in the state.

The chairman asks THE HIGH SCHOOL JOURNAL to bespeak communications on this subject from all teachers interested in the question of minimum essentials in English.—C. A. H.

THE ORIGIN OF SOME PROBLEMS IN ALGEBRA

By W. W. RANKIN
Agnes Scott College, Georgia

PERHAPS it is worth while for the student of algebra to know the source of some of his troubles. What seems "dry" and uninteresting might be appreciated if presented in its proper historical setting. Not long after he begins to study algebra he will likely meet with the "tank" problems, the "labor" problems and many other puzzle problems. He finds these problems carefully phrased in the language of practical mathematics. However, a study of the original problems and the fanciful way in which they were stated will reveal the fact that they were originally intended mostly for puzzles. The present-day student of algebra would doubtless work as industriously over the so-called practical problems if he were told they were puzzle problems that his predecessors had worked on for the past 1600 years.

The problems given below are selected from a collection made by Metrodorus about 310 A. D. found in Greek Anthology. It is not known how much farther back they date. It will not be difficult for the reader to trace many of the problems found in the present-day algebras back to their original source. He may judge for himself as to whether the modern text-book writer has improved the problems by leaving off the little fanciful touches of rhetoric, found in the original.

The original problems were solved by rhetorical algebra as our symbols, $+$, $-$, $=$, x , y , etc., were introduced many centuries later, about 1540.

We three Loves stand here pouring out water for the bath, sending streams into the fair-flowing tank. I on the right, from my long-winged feet, fill it in the sixth part of a day; I on the left, from my jar, fill it in four hours; and I in the middle, from my bows in just half a day. Tell me in what a short time we should fill it, pouring water from wings, bows, and jar all at once. (Answer 1-11 of a day.)

This is Polyphemus the brazen Cyclops, and as if on him someone made an eye, a mouth, and a hand, connecting them with pipes. He looks quite as if he were dripping water and seems also to be spouting it from his mouth. None of the spouts are irregular; that from his hand when running will fill the cistern in three days only, that from his eye in one day, and his mouth in two-fifth of a day. Who will tell me the time it takes when all three are running? (Answer 6-23 of a day.)

Brick-makers, I am in a great hurry to erect this house. To-day is cloudless and I do not require many more bricks, but I have all I want but three hundred. Thou alone in one day couldst make as many, but thy son left off working when he had finished two hundred, and thy son-in-law when he had made two hundred and fifty. Working all together, in how many days can you make these? (Answer—2-5 of a day.)

Diodorus, great glory of dial-makers, tell me the hour since when the golden wheels of the sun leapt up from the east to the pole. Four times three-fifths of the distance he has traversed remain until he sinks to the western sea. (Answer 3 and 9-17 had passed, and 8 and 8-17 remained.)

Cypris thus addressed Love, who was looking down-cast: "How my child, hath sorrow fallen on thee?" And he answered: "The Muses stole and divided among themselves, in different proportions, the apples I was bringing from Helicon, snatching them from my bosom. Clio got the fifth part, Euterpe the twelfth, but divine Thalia the eighth. Melpomene carried off the twentieth part, and Terpsichore the fourth, and Erato the seventh; Polyhymnia robbed me of thirty apples, and Urania of a hundred and twenty, and Calliope went off with a load of three hundred apples. So I came to thee with lighter hands, bringing these fifty apples that the goddesses left me. (Answer—Love had 3,360 apples.)

Make me a crown weighing sixty minae, mixing gold and brass and with them tin and much-wrought iron. Let the gold and the bronze together form two-thirds, the gold and the tin together three-fourths, and the gold and iron three-fifths. Tell me how much gold